

THE EASTERN BUDDHIST

Hsüan-tsang's "he hides his innumerable noble virtues" is none other than a different rendering of *sthāpayitvā*.

NAOAO GADJIN

PURE LAND BUDDHIST PAINTING By Jōji Okazaki. Translated and adapted by Elizabeth ten Grotenhuis. Tokyo, Kodansha, 1977. 201 pp. with 52 color plates, 166 monochrome illustrations, glossary, bibliography, and index.

As the first work in English, possibly in any European language, on the iconography of the Pure Land schools, Jōji Okazaki's book assumes a special importance for Western scholars and laymen alike. It was originally published in Japanese in the monthly series *Nihon no bijutsu* ("Arts of Japan") inaugurated by the Shibundo Publishing Company in 1966. This invaluable periodical, which was undertaken with the cooperation and editorial supervision of the Agency for Cultural Affairs and of the three National Museums of Kyoto, Nara, and Tokyo, now totals over 130 issues. Each is written in language easily comprehensible to laymen by a leading Japanese scholar in the field and presents a detailed study of a single aspect of the Japanese arts. Under the general title of "The Japanese Arts Library," this series is now being made available to an English-reading audience in translations done under the editorial supervision of John Rosenfeld of Harvard University.

Realizing the paucity of authentic information regarding the Pure Land tradition available in the West, the translators have wisely augmented their book with a special introduction to this unjustly neglected aspect of Buddhism, giving information unnecessary to Japanese readers. The section in the original Japanese on the religious portraiture of the seven Pure Land patriarchs and some of their later followers has also been incorporated into this introduction written for the English edition by Elizabeth ten Grotenhuis.

The body of this book is naturally devoted to a detailed description of the iconography of Pure Land paintings in Japan, and in its eight chapters covers its main forms, such as "*Hensō*: Visions of Paradise" (Chapter 1), Chinese as well as Japanese; "Pure Land Mandalas" (Chapter 2) in its three main types; and "*Raigō*: the Descent of Amida" (Chapter 4), this most important form in which is depicted Amida with his retinue of Bodhisattvas. Variations of these themes are taken up in the remaining chapters. A useful Glossary, Bibliography, and Index are appended.

Readers already interested in Pure Land Buddhist painting will find this work full of carefully researched information and scholarship, although the

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prose style, at least in translation, is academically dry and dully factual. Nor do the color and black-and-white illustrations give any adequate idea of the splendour of the originals. Even allowing for the difficulties of photographing incense-darkened and age-dimmed paintings on silk, many of the black-and-white illustrations are too small and their details indistinguishable. One might reasonably have expected better quality reproduction. But despite these disadvantages, this work, *faute de mieux*, is an essential addition to all libraries, personal or institutional, concerned with Buddhist art.

HAROLD STEWART

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